372 /399 cont./
women are like the vestals of old, and never allow the fire to go out in the frail barques" (MM:X, 20: 1878) /cited in English/.

B. Clothing

• 291 511 Since the time the Yamana became known beyond the borders of their remote island world, an amazing fact concerning them continues to be discussed in European circles to this day, namely, that they enjoy excellent health in their damp, raw homeland without any clothing and body covering to speak of. Every European is convinced that a human being under the weather conditions existing there must be dependent on very ample protection if he is to survive. Nevertheless, the short scrap of leather that the Fuegians hang loosely around their necks does not even deserve to be called clothing or body covering. All observers agree, and in their accounts express their astonishment in no uncertain terms, that the natives "ordinarily go about completely naked." These are also the specific words of one of the first missionaries, Aspinall: 270. Further documentation will be found below.

147 At the same time, observers recognize the healthy physical development and the great resistance of the natives, although they never describe the full significance of that most vital resource which is constantly at their disposal, namely, their open fire.

372 /400/ This fire more than compensates for the complete lack of protective body covering. An easily accessible stand of trees furnishes the required fuel for everyone. With it he can maintain a warm fire in the hut, in the canoe, in any open place, and at every campsite. The fire alone makes life possible in that region.

291 A short back-cape of skin is the only article of clothing, alike in shape and brevity for all sexes and ages. It is functional chiefly because it gives the comforting fire unobstructed access to the whole surface of the body.

291 481 In their manufacture of articles, our Indians are dependent primarily on furs and skins as their raw material. This is also true of the little that one might call their "clothing." A complicated method of preparation is not possible because there are no tools for it. Also, it would not be worthwhile because the high humidity

/400 cont./

291 everywhere soon has a destructive effect. Everything, however,
291 testifies to a far-reaching modesty in their demands and to the complete self-sufficiency of these natives, which surprises every observer.

291 It is worth emphasizing that the amount of clothing as such does not always offer the best and most healthful protection for the
[177] body. In any case, however, the consequences are disastrous, for any people when their arrangements, which have for centuries proved serviceable, are forcefully suppressed or put aside by mistaken judges who have come from different conditions of life (65).

65. In this connection see page 35 /untranslated/ on the many disadvantages that developed for the Yamana when they adopted European clothing at the mission station and afterwards.

291 It is instructively stimulating to compare the customary
171 dress of the Yamana with that of their neighbors on either side. The Halakwulup in the west, in the same climatic conditions and like economic circumstances, have exactly the same body covering as the Yamana. The Selk'nam, on the other hand, living in a country with less precipitation, travel by day and do not make an open fire until evening to protect themselves for the cold night. They do not rub as much fat onto their bodies, but instead wrap themselves in a wide, well-fitting cloak of soft guanaco leather. Since they have less chance to remain beside an open fire, they seek a substitute in a warmer piece of clothing. This proves how intelligently and sensitively every tribe has chosen what is most serviceable and advantageous from among the few possibilities offered by its environment.

291 If we regard as body covering the inconsequential piece of leather that the Yamana hang around themselves, Lothrop:121 is right when he says: "It is no exaggeration to remark that, considering the climate in which they had to live, this southernmost tribe had less body-covering than any other people in /401/ the world" /cited in English/. Anything less in the way of body protection than the Yamana have in their frosty Cape Horn region cannot be imagined.

/401 cont./

• 291 For further documentation we give here a few more opinions of former travelers. Decker (p. 52) says briefly and emphatically: "The men go about quite naked; only the women cover their natural parts with a piece of leather" (66). George Forster (b):243

66. See Fig. 10, p. 55 /untranslated/ for the first picture of the Yamana, dated 1624.

wrote in December, 1774, about the natives of Christmas Sound: "They had no clothing other than a piece of sealskin which hung down over only about half of their loins and the upper part of which scarcely covered their shoulders. Thus, their hands, feet, and whole bodies were exposed to a cold which affected even us, although we were well protected against it." A few lines below he adds: "They seemed very sensitive to the cold, for their whole bodies were trembling..." Near Angostura Murray, Snow (a):II, 16 was surrounded by many natives. "They were all unclothed, except one or two of the women, who had fragments of some guanaco, or seal-skin, thrown across the shoulder" /cited in English/. Snow (b):262 gave them articles of European clothing, which they found cumbersome. "The men directly they came on deck were clothed by us, but evidently they did not like such confinement of their limbs" /cited in English/. Soon after his arrival Despard reported his impression of the miserable Yamana: "Their destitution is great, and they have but the pretence of clothing in a strip of seal or other skin over their shoulders" (VSA: XIII, 81: 1866) /cited in English/. Bove (d) :290 expressed himself in somewhat more detail: "A short, little cape of sealskin or guanaco hide, thrown on the back and held by a tape that passes around the neck, is the only clothing of a Fuegian. Some of them do not even have the meager cape" /translated from Italian/. This means, as indeed he briefly states (g) :234: "They go nearly nude in that rigorous and stormy climate" /translated from Italian/. Lovisato (b) :141 agrees with him that "everyone is completely nude, men and women. Sometimes one sees a woman, or even a man, whose back is covered with the skin of an otter or sea lion, used as a cape" /translated from Italian/. At the sight of these naked savages in the rough Cape Horn region every European marveled at their vitality, their degree of resistance, and their genuine good health.

/401 cont./

•291

1. Man's Clothing

The Yamana do not use special clothing for each sex. The sexes can be more than clearly recognized by their almost uncovered bodies. The essential article of clothing owned by the Indian is his tuwéaki, a cape that hangs over his back, which can properly be called his only article of clothing. It is almost never larger than the area of his back, the uneven edges forming a more or less rectangular shape. Through a few holes on the narrower edge the man draws a /402/ strap barely one centimeter wide which he puts around his neck and ties in a knot under his chin. The piece of leather hangs free, and he pushes it either to the right or left, according to whether he wishes to protect this or that side of his body. If it hinders him or becomes burdensome, he unties the knot of the strap under his chin and throws it off.

Weddel:157 describes this garment of the men as "a skin over their shoulders, reaching little more than half way down the back; some have not even this sorry garment" /cited in English/ (67).

> 67. A few years later Fitz-Roy (a):138 observed among the inhabitants of Tekenika Bay: "Sometimes these satires upon mankind wear a part of the skin of a guanaco or seal skin upon their backs; but often there is nothing, either to hide their nakedness or to preserve warmth, except a scrap of hide, which is tied to the side or back of the body, by a string around the waist" /cited in English/.

The same piece serves the undemanding Yamana summer and winter; even for the cold season he asks for no better protection. Bove (c) :127 also confirms this: In that dreadful climate, where there is much snow and rain, wild storms, and bitter, damp cold, everyone owns only "a little cape of sealskin or guanaco hide, held at the neck by a strip of leather" /translated from Spanish/.

The piece of leather is never large enough or wide enough to wrap around the entire torso. Upon leaving his hut, the wearer pushes it across his shoulders to whichever side of his body is turned

/402 cont./

291 toward the wind, for it hangs very loosely on a single strip of leather drawn around the neck. When they go to sleep at night, they untie this cape and use it as a cover. Fortunately, our Indians have such an enviable ability to curl themselves up that most of the body is covered by this tiny piece of leather.

291 It is principally the small sea lion that furnishes its skin
291 for this cape. Sometimes two small pieces are sewed together. The edges are cut fairly evenly. In the southern regions the man also uses a small cloak made of two or three otter skins, whereas the inhabitants of the east wear a similarly large fur piece from the guanaco. As we know, guanacos are easily obtainable on Navarino Island and on the north shore of eastern Beagle Channel. Sea lions are less common. It is possible that the eastern Yamana, [177] following the example of the neighboring Selk'nam, have only in the most recent times made the wider and longer cloak that covers the entire body. Originally they used it as little as did the other groups (68).

68. Bridges writes: "The natives of the shores of Beagle Channel are frequently enrobed in a guanaco skin; not the beautiful guanaco robes used by the Patagonians, but the coarse shaggy skins of the grown animals which the Patagonians use only as tent covers" (VP III, 119; 1858) /cited in English/.

291 The cape does not demand any care, and when it is worn out, it can easily be replaced. The fur side is advantageously worn on the outside. If the layer of fur were next to the skin, a great deal of dirt and perspiration would accumulate, one's skin would be scratched or irritated by the larger bristles, /403/ and the entire piece would become hard and stiff, since the leather would constantly be exposed to rain. The layer of leather, however, although soaked with blubber, is lubricated, so to speak, by the oily skin of the body on which it lies, and this keeps it soft longer. Moreover, the rain easily drips off the layer of fur worn outside and cannot soak through the whole piece. The decisive factor, as I learned, is that the Indians find the layer of fur uncomfortable against the naked skin of their bodies. No wonder, since even this light cape

/403 cont./

• 291 often feels annoying or uncomfortable to them. In the hut and in the canoe, at work and on the hunt, the man carelessly lets it fall by loosening the leather knot, and he feels better now than he did before. He wants to be entirely free for the goal he happens to be pursuing. The piece is durable, but it gets hard wear and is given no care at all. After only a few weeks it is shabby and torn at the edges, but the man drags it about for more than half a year (68).

68. The following authors mention this back cape of the men: Aspinall:278, Bove (x):107, Dabbene (b): 178, Hyades (g) :337, Lothrop (b) :121, Snow (x) :2, 16, Spegazzini (x) :161, and others.

291 BIY 834 Most of the men at all times and everywhere wear a covering over the genitals which is somewhat larger than that worn by the women. They prefer a smooth piece of leather from which the fur has been entirely removed. It is, of course, used only for the sake of decency. Nevertheless, some old men become so careless that they almost habitually go without it. When they sit or stand, their conduct betrays a certain bashfulness, it is true, but this feeling is no longer strong enough in them that they would go to the trouble of wearing a covering. The people generally do not like to see young or middle-aged persons completely naked, but no one cares to remonstrate with old men. Nevertheless, the latter, when they are sitting, take care that their nakedness does not offend the eyes of those present. Defiant nakedness is not approved on principle.

291 177 In olden times neither fringework nor any kind of foot covering was known. Whereas it was always lacking among the people of the Cape Horn region, as Hyades (d) :268 maintains (70), it was

70. Fitz-Roy (x) :138 in his day reported of the southern people that "neither men nor women have any substitute for dress" /cited in English/.

probably only in recent times that regular aprons of guanaco and seal skins were adopted in the middle and eastern region. Some

/463 cont./
influence by the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 313) cannot be dismissed, while in the west it may have come from the Halakwulup, for the latter wear sandals of sealskin, as do their northern neighbors, the now extinct Chono and the Araucanian natives of the Chiloé Archipelago (73).

73. On May 10, 1867, Bridges reported on a journey to the east: "The snow is about 4 feet deep, and it freezes hard every night, and some of the men wear moccasins" (MM.I, 164, 1867) /typed in English/. He does not describe these sandals; they may have been adopted from the Halakwulup.

/464/ The Yamana sandals, ákhi, have almost the same cut as those of the Selk'nam (Fig. 12). A piece of hide from the guanaco or the sea lion, about 45 centimeters long and 20 centimeters wide, is cut to form approximately a rectangle. A few holes are punched close together across the wider of the two narrow ends and in the upper half near the edges. The foot is placed upon it in such a way that the front flap of leather is turned back over the toes and the dorsal part of the foot. The side edges are then folded up, and the perpendicular seam over the heel is laced with a short strip of leather. Beginning directly over the toes (Fig. 12 appears here) the free ends of a single cross are drawn through the holes lying one above the other parallel to the edges, and the strap is fastened over the instep. Straw or moss is used to stuff the sandal, in which the feet remain warm and dry. Since the fur is on the outside, the foot has sufficient grip on the ground. Moreover, the hairs on the sole of the sandal always point forward, which prevents slipping. The leather is quickly softened by the damp earth, and the foot itself adjusts its grip to every kind of footing. In view of this, the sandals prove superior to European footgear, especially on treks over the uneven, wet forest floor. The packing can quickly and become musty, but it is renewed without any trouble.

It is true that the sandals of sealskin have an even more

•291 /404 cont./
unpleasant odor (72) when they are soaked by wet earth than those of guanaco skin, which are called Ema yakili (72). The latter

73. The western Yamana did not know this word; they almost always went barefoot.

are worn much less commonly by the Yamana, since seahkin is handier and more convenient for him. He wears his sandals for the most part only on longer treks through the forest, hardly ever in the hut or in the canoe. In spite of the many advantages they

Fig. 15. Sandal.

afford, most men never wear them, even though going barefoot in some places is very disagreeable (see Bridges in VSA: 82, 280, 1864).

[177] In the east where the guanaco is easy to hunt, the men, presumably under the influence of the Selk'nam, learned to wear a type of leggings /405/ that form a tube-like protection for the lower calves. The piece of leather, cut like a trapezoid, is put on with the woolly side against the lower calf and is laced across the back lengthwise with a narrow leather band, so that it clings tightly to the leg. They protect themselves on tramps through the snow with these legs, according to RD:184, "leggings used only when hunting guanaco in snowy weather" /cited in English/

/4006 cont./

•291 (Lothrop [1] :124 writes pdwa) (74). Everything points to the fact

74. BD:164 also maintains that this type of legging was used to a limited extent, which is obvious from his words quoted above.

that this protection of the lower leg was neither originally nor generally used by the Yamana. See Feiliyelliet in BD:139.

2. Woman's Clothing

The woman wears the same back-cape as the man, the tawáki, for body protection, scant though it is. There is no difference between the two sexes in the proportions, shape, or method of wearing it. In exceptional cases we find some woman with a leather piece somewhat longer or wider so that it looks like a shoulder cape (75). In general the women prefer otter skins and

75. With the same thing in mind Fuo-Koy (a) :138 wrote: "Women wear rather more clothing [than men], that is, they have nearly the whole skin of a guanaco, or seal, wrapped about them, and usually a diminutive apron" /cited in English/.

sew two to four of them together, occasionally even eight to ten. The heavier, longer hairs are removed from these skins, so that only the velvety smooth fur remains. The skins of several cormorants and penguins are chosen for this back-cape on the southern islands. Further north the skin of two or three foxes is sometimes used. It is partly convenience, utilizing what is at hand, and partly fondness for down, which is by no means wanting in Indian women, that determines the choice of furs and skins for the back-cape. A cape of otter skins is the most valuable; cormorant skins are supposed to be prettier. Each of these pieces affords as little protection and cover as the other, but no one expects or misses far more (76).

76. Bridges (Mss III, 116, 1868) unnecessarily

•291

/401 cont./

judges the usefulness of this back-cape: "The Indians of the outer coasts are well supplied with skins of seals and otters, and are, or might be, well protected from the weather. But those of the inner shores are badly off for skins, and even use the skins of dogs and penguins for cloaks, and generally have only two fox or otter skins, or a single fur seal skin, only sufficient to cover their shoulders" /cited in English/.

It is almost never the case that an Indian woman does not have this modest back-cape. Sometimes a woman carrying an infant enlarges it, thus making a sort of shawl that covers the entire upper part of her body and under which the child can snuggle. If she wishes to protect the child especially well, she reverses the cloak so that the fur side is against her back. Furthermore, the woman who /401/ in bad weather wishes to save her cloak temporarily turns the leather side out. Afterwards she turns it over again.

In every respect the opinions of two earlier travelers are noteworthy. Snow (1) II, 16 writes about a small group that he met in the Beagle Channel: "They were all unclothed, except one or two of the women, who had fragments of some guanaco, or seal-skin, thrown across the shoulder" /cited in English/. Snow (2) :337 expresses himself in a more general way: "Ornament and a small cloak of guanaco or seal skin comprise the outfit of a Fuegian; some do not even own a cloak, but defy all inclemencies of the weather with naked chest, naked arms and legs." Women, too, wishing to protect themselves to a certain extent against wind and weather, follow the habit of the men and sometimes hang this short, narrow cloak over the more exposed side of the body. Hyades (2) :307 says in this connection: "Most of the time each individual has a skin of seal or otter, which he places over his shoulders to protect himself when a lookout from the wind" /translated from French/. Long before this Argensoli. 170 wrote: The inhabitants of Beagle Channel "ordinarily go completely naked, except for a small skin around their shoulders."

/406 cont./

• 241 The brief "modesty apron" (77) worn by every woman and

77. This article is mentioned, for example, by Decker (p. 32), George Farcar (p. 19), Waddel (p. 68), Snow (p.283 and others. "It is used by all the girls and women of the country, from the youngest to the oldest. It is extremely rare for a Fuegian woman to be without this article of clothing, and if she loses it for some reason, her first concern is to procure another one" (La Nature 312) /translated from French/.

even by most of the men is indispensable. It is known as *mañakina*, *colloglin*, and they are never without it. We particularly want to refer to it here, because some European travelers take it so very much for granted that they either do not mention it specifically or do not describe it enough. It is so necessary to a woman's outfit that Hyades (p) 338 wrote: "There is no difference between the two sexes, except that the women wear a little "vine leaf" made of guanaco hide" /translated from French/ (78). There is no such

78. In another connection Hyades (p) 348 again speaks of this "article of dress which, by its location and dimensions, precisely reminds one of the vine leaf that is put on some statue" /translated from French/.

thing as going naked among the women and girls.

241 Pfm Whereas Dabbene (b) :178 assures us that men sometimes do not have any kind of covering, he nevertheless emphasizes without qualification: "The women always wear a belt with a little piece of hide that covers only the genital parts" /translated from Spanish/. How zealously every woman clings to this modesty-apron and avoids complete nudity in front of men is apparent from an observation which Hyades (p) :408 has inserted in a description of the pictures in his monograph. Plate 11 shows a nude girl named "Kamenáiser Kipa. Figure 1 shows her at a moment when she was not wearing her little apron, a very rare occurrence. our /407/

/407 cont./
lamented comrade, Naval Lieutenant Payen, who took this photograph, was very well acquainted with this girl, but he could never persuade her to move her right hand from the place where the apron belonged" /translated from French/.

This apron is thus strictly demanded by decency and a feeling of modesty. Even at night the women do not remove it (78).

78. Hyades (f):561 again speaks of this in detail: "The women have only a little covering for modesty, intended to hide the genital parts, which consists of a very short and very narrow triangle suspended between the thighs. It is made of guanaco hide, with the fur turned inward. They never, or almost never, remove this covering; during the conjugal act, it is simply raised up on the abdomen" /translated from French/. Compare also Hyades (b):1346.

It is usually triangular in shape, about 15 centimeters wide at the top and about ten centimeters long in the middle. Some are also trapezoidal or rectangular in shape. They always choose a soft piece of leather and prefer guanaco leather, both sides of which are scraped and rubbed with blubber. Girls and younger women use pieces of otter and guanaco skins without removing the fur. They wear the fur side against their bodies (80). A hole is bored into

80. Hyades (f) :307 thinks that this is "probably because its contact against the skin is softer than that of leather" /translated from French/.

the two upper corners, in one of which is knotted a narrow leather band or a braided tendon. This is drawn over the hips and knotted on the other corner. The apron hangs freely, fits well, is tightly pressed between the legs, and serves its purpose (81). This piece

81. Ludewig (b) :223 says only: "A triangular pubic-covering of skin was usually worn by the

0291

/407 cont./
women" /cited in English/. More explicitly Hyades (q) :338 again writes: "The women alone wear a little triangular scrap of guanaco skin in the pubic region. It is from twelve to fifteen centimeters long and from seven to eight centimeters wide at the bottom" /translated from French/.

is renewed only after long wear; it is not customary to wash it.

Women never wear sandals; they work much more comfortably barefoot. Moreover, they must often step into water and walk around on the wet earth. They also do not have any kind of head covering (82), nor do the men and children. Their thick,

[301]

82. Fitz-Roy (a) :176 had observed: "A small fillet is all that is worn around the head. Usually this is a mere string, made of the sinews of birds or animals" /cited in English/. This piece is a simple head ornament.

strong, and abundant hair is an adequate covering against wind and rain for the Fuegians of all ages.

3. Children's Clothing

The body covering of children corresponds to that of adults, not only in its essentials, but even in small details. The little ones, too, have no other body protection than the short back-cape which is adapted somewhat to their undeveloped bodies and made of soft leather of younger animals. The Indians do not seem to know how to prepare it carefully, hence it hangs on the dirty body of the child like an old rag. /408/ It does not occur to anyone to take care of it. Hyades says briefly (q) :330: "Children three or four years old from time to time wear a small skin on the shoulder" /translated from French/. In such scanty covering these small, shy creatures give every European the impression of great neglect and pitiful destitution.

/408 cont./

As long as they are still dependent on the special care of their mothers, they crawl about naked. When they begin to walk by themselves, they get the back-cape which they wear or toss off according to their mood or fancy. /Fig. 16 appears here./ It serves them also as "cover" when they sleep at night. Somewhat later, at the age of four, the girl gets her mašakána, mēlagána, the triangular modesty-apron, which henceforth she must not remove. All the women see to it that the child in its innocence does not expose itself. The size of the child's body

Fig. 16. Modesty-Apron for Girls.
Two-thirds natural size.

determines the proportions of this pubic covering (Fig. 16). Boys do not wear this covering until they are ten years old or older; it is left to the discretion of parents or relatives. They feel that it is not necessary for boys to wear a modesty-apron, since old men also sometimes omit it, but when they begin to mature physically, boys no longer appear without it in the company of adults.

[BS] It is the task of the mother to make the simple, modest articles of clothing for their children. This does not require particular effort, and yet many a woman idly watches her child run about in a shabby, torn little cloak for a long time before she replaces the useless, soiled piece with a better one. Children

/408 cont./

291 take care of their clothing just as little as adults do. They drag it through mud and ashes and use it to sit on and as a cover for sleeping; they wrap meat and shells in it and make use of it whenever and however it may serve them. For its part the climate has a great deteriorating effect on all leather. Even though it is more or less saturated with blubber and is constantly, consciously or unconsciously, rubbed with fat, the layer of fur on the outside soon wears out through much use, /409/ and then dampness can get at it on both sides. Mold is constantly forming and in a short time causes large, irregular soft patches that easily tear and cause holes. Then, at last, the mother provides a long-needed replacement. Otter skins are more precious than seal skins, but every mother prefers to use the former because they are softer and more beautiful, and she does not mind that they are not as durable.

These children of nature do not worry and are not anxiously concerned about their clothing. If a boy has to wait for days for a new cloak because he has lost his old one, he makes up for it in the daytime with the warmth of the hut fire, and at night he snuggles close to his brothers and sisters who give him some of their body warmth or a little space under their own short backcapes which serve them all as a cover. They are satisfied with the least of everything.

4. Purpose of Clothing

291 834 The two pieces of leather with which the Yamana cover only small areas of their bodies cannot possibly be regarded as clothing. Without giving it much thought, one recognizes the brief triangular apron as something required on principle by a feeling of modesty. This is proved by the shape of this mallakána as such, and the fact that all female persons must never be seen without it. As a matter of fact, all the young and middle-aged men, practically without exception, appear in front of women with this covering. It is only the old men who no longer give offense by complete nudity (p. 54), no matter how much the adults in their vicinity dislike seeing them in this state (83). Furthermore,

83. Lothrop's (b):121 too general assertion

•291
834

/409 cont./
"that individuals of both sexes and all ages often went entirely naked" /cited in English/ must thus be qualified.

the general practice of putting this pubic covering on girls when they are still children, without any kind of accompanying festivity or ceremony, is most significant. When women change these coverings or remove them for any reason, they avoid doing so in the presence of other persons (84). Girls learn to conduct them-

[867]

84. See page 59 as to the conduct of young Kamanakarkipa who was caught by surprise without her modesty-apron by a French officer.

selves properly while standing and sitting, not only by the example of the adults, but through special instruction.

This scrap of leather, to be sure, is only the size of one's hand and is suspended from a mere string around the hips, but, as Hyades (g) :33 has observed, "they never appear without this Mashakana, which is quite sufficient for them, although one can by no means say that they lack a sense of modesty." When sitting, they usually keep their thighs together and place one foot in such a position that the heel presses the pubic covering against the /416/ body. Only an old man sometimes squats on the ground without a covering and with his legs wide apart.

[516]

Hyades (p) :338 aptly says of this small piece of skin: "it is an emblem of modesty" /translated from French/. Women even regard it as improper merely to speak of it. For this reason I tactfully had to persuade an old woman to make this piece for me, which I wanted to add to my collection. She made it in secret and gave it to me with the remark that I should not mention it to other people. Sometimes younger women cover their breasts with the short back-cape, at any rate if men should annoy them with meaningful glances.

291

The little cloak can only provide meager and incomplete protection against wind and bad weather. A continuous cold current of air from one direction against a part of the body is intolerable for anyone. Even so, a person sitting in a canoe and obliged to reach a certain goal cannot protect himself against it in any other

291 /618 cont./

way but by pulling the brief cape around him as a cover. Actually it gives perceptible protection and saves these people from severe injury to their health. It cannot be longer or wider, or it would keep off the warmth of the nearby fire and get in the way of the arms while rowing or working. These are mainly the decisive considerations when the Yamana make the back-cape in its customary shape and size. A large and woolly fur cloak, somewhat like that used by the Selk'nam, may temporarily cover the body well and uniformly warm it, but it does not permit the free movement of the arms that everyone absolutely demands, especially in the canoe.

If a European would look at that pitiful body covering from the standpoint of the Indians, he would be convinced of its surprisingly functional nature and would, at the same time, have an opportunity to appreciate the ingenuity and adaptability of these people. Clothing to the native is just not useful if it swathes the entire body (85). Serviceable and durable fur and animal

85. Krickeberg:321 says briefly: "Protective clothing is almost entirely lacking. A small cloak of seal or otter skin hangs down from the man's shoulder. A triangular apron of guanaco leather is the only clothing of the woman." This outfit could not be reduced to less, even in tropical Africa.

skins are available to our Yamana, and they could easily be made into a closed garment for the entire body. It is not absolutely necessary, however, because everyone everywhere has easy access to the open fire. Besides the fresh air that constantly bathes the body, everyone benefits much more from this than they would from a closed garment which, in that rainy climate, would hardly ever be completely dry and could never be kept clean. It is true that the Indians' teeth sometimes chatter with cold or they bend over stiff with cold in a downpour and in a snow storm, but one need endure such discomfort /611/ only until he reaches a fire or lights a new one. In the shortest time the whole body is then thoroughly and evenly warmed and the skin completely dry, for

/411 cont./

291 they alternately turn one side of the body and then the other to the fire, each time pushing their cape in the opposite direction with a slight movement of the hand.

Misdirected sympathy that knows nothing about the advantages of all the resources our natives have for the protection of their bodies pities them unduly and underestimates their wise judgment in the things they have expediently invented and chosen for themselves. As a matter of fact, they avoid much damage to their health because they do not tolerate material that clings to their bodies. Frequent rain and snow, wet air, and the vigorous splashing of waves which constantly wash them promote a healthy skin which is good for the whole organism. The short back-cape with its rough leather side turned toward the skin also acts as a gentle rubbing agent. If all this were omitted with a change in the mode of dress, what equivalent would the Indian have? To begin with, he does not have to be afraid of uneven warmth and of weakening the parts of his body that are covered among other peoples. With their pure sensibilities, and even more, their discerning judgment, these natural people were not unaware of all the harm that followed the later introduction of clothing to which they were not accustomed. Their effort to reject the foreign, unhealthful coercion was instinctive. Nowadays the last survivors are quite frank about their conviction that European clothing, tika, and diet, together with imported diseases and alcoholic beverages, have caused the swift destruction of their people (p. 339 /untranslated/).

291 177

382 The inhabitants of those distant islands need never reckon with extreme cold, although the weather and the air are always damp and cool. If the heat of the fire should be inadequate or if there is a long trek in prospect and it is very cold, they protect themselves by thoroughly rubbing the entire body with a mixture of blubber and red powder from burnt clay. Ordinarily scarcely any dampness clings to the skin of the body which has been amply greased, and sometimes one sees rain or sea water fall off in drops. This layer of thick grease is a protection also in that it retains the person's own body warmth (86). This was also true in the case of the

86. Aspinall:270, mentioning this expedient, wrote: They "have the habit of rubbing their

302 /411 cont./ bodies with an ointment made of blubber and red earth, which probably also affords some protection against the cold." Before that, Snow (b):264 mentioned it: "The only thing they do to keep more warm is to rub themselves over with grease and ochreous earth" /cited in English/. Fitz-Roy (a):139 mentioned the same purpose: "Both sexes oil themselves, or rubb /sic/ their bodies with grease" /cited in English/. Spears:53 also mentions this custom and adds: "Had the early explorers imitated instead of despised the Jahgan, they would have had fewer tales of suffering to tell" /cited in English/.

single anointment with blubber of the whale /412/ or sea lion. This made every person glisten with oil from head to foot, which had a most amazing effect on European travelers and missionaries until they became accustomed to the sight. This simple and very effective measure was available to everyone, and they all liked to use it when cold winds blew or when there was heavy rain. Such [77] an anointment with blubber is no longer possible with the European clothing that is customary today. Instead, every article of clothing is full of dirt and grease.

•291 In spite of everything, the extremely meager body protection of our Indians proves their great power of resistance against the extreme inclemency of the weather in their homeland and their undemanding contentment. Even though their one article of clothing is serviceable and their open fire an indispensable advantage, there would still be room for a few simple comforts. Compared with the neighboring Selk'nam, our Yamana are obviously in a somewhat less favorable position.

5. Preparation of Furs and Skins

291 Our Indians need the furs and skins of their game animals (87).

87. In some places the Indian has a good selection. Thus Bridges wrote on June 4, 1864, about his visit

1: Gusinde--1450 E-S (1918-1924) 1937 SHS Yahgan SHS

142
362
291

Yamana Man

Yamana Woman

Yamana Children

Children at Play

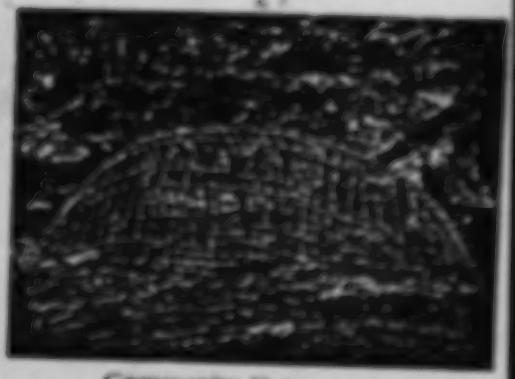
133

Beach of Beagle Channel

1: Gwinde--1451 E-S (1918-1924) 1927 5196 Yahgan 5196

342

Single Hut



Community Hut

524

Waiyandella Game

Haiyekanaxtwa Game

[291]

Former Clothing

Vulture Game

Albatross Game

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 3916 Yahgan 3916

342 quently used toward the east, was tipi-form, with a framework of stiff stout saplings or tree trunks.

The ground in the interior of the hut was often, but not always, scooped out, to a depth of 2, 3, or more feet (0.6 to 1 m.) beneath the outside ground level, and was usually covered with a little grass or [358] some branches. The fire was made in the center. The hute had one door, facing the sea; or else two doors, one facing the sea, the other being opposite.

172 342 Archeological stratification in the *Yahgan* area of Navarino Island shows an earlier culture with shelters like those still used by the *Alakaluf*, oval in ground plan, having two entrances, and without scooped-out pits; and a later one with circular shelters having one entrance, and with pits 12 to 15 feet (4 to 5 m.) in diameter, scooped out in some cases to a depth of more than 3 feet (1 m.) (Bird, 1938, p. 261). The two historic types of *Yahgan* wigwam, oval and circular, unpitted and pitted, may thus represent two chronologically distinct cultures.

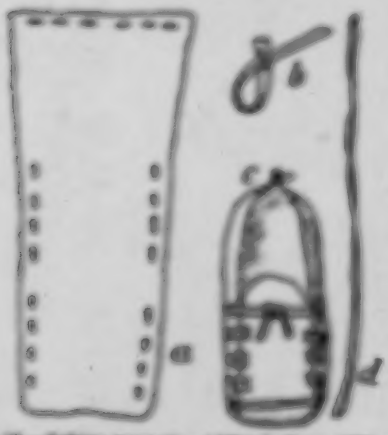
342 Larger and more substantial huts were built for initiation rites (q. v., infra); sometimes very small ones, for the use of children. The *Yahgan* also at times used caves or made a very rude shelter of a few branches tied together or stuck in the ground.

197 342 At the time of Lothrop's visit in 1924-25, practically all the then surviving *Yahgan* were accustomed to pass the winter months at Puerto Mejillones and Puerto Pinlay, on Navarino Island, in huts poorly constructed of ill-fitting boards (Lothrop, 1928, p. 109). Lothrop (1928, p. 121) considers the use of the wing of a large bird for [239] sweeping out the shelter to have probably been the result of missionary [240] influence.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

291 Clothing.—The chief garment, for men and women, was a small cape, of seal, sea-otter, or fox skin, sometimes of two or more skins sewn together—occasionally of bird skins—worn with the fur outside, covering the shoulder and breast or reaching to the waist, and held in place by a string across the chest. It was commonly shifted outdoors over the windward shoulder. Very frequently it was left off entirely. The women rarely if ever went without a small triangular pubic covering of bird skin or hide, held in place by a string attached to each upper corner and encircling the waist (pl. 33, *f*). No head covering was worn. Usually the *Yahgan* went barefoot, but sometimes when traveling or hunting on land they wore rather crudely made moccasins (fig. 11), resembling closely the *Ona* ones in pattern, of seal skin, with the hair outside, and stuffed inside with grass (cf. Lothrop, 1928, p. 134, photo). The eastern *Yahgan*, when hunting guanaco in winter, sometimes wore guanaco skin leggings, like the *Ona*, from whom they

2 Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 2985 Yahgan SH6



probably borrowed them. The *Yahgan* occasionally used a rude fingerless working glove of hide. The clothing of the *Yahgan* seems to us utterly inadequate, given the climatic conditions—temperatures commonly around and well below freezing point in winter, high winds, frequent snow, hail, sleet, and cold rain—but in view of the seeming role played in their decline by introduced European clothing and their relative good health prior thereto, perhaps their clothing was reasonably well adapted to the environment.

302 **Hairdressing and depilation.**—The hair was worn loose, not in braids, and was often banged. Sometimes a sort of tonsure was worn. A sharp-edged mussel shell was used to cut the hair. For combing the hair, more commonly the jawbone of a porpoise or otter, or a toothed comb made of whalebone, was used; sometimes, a brush comb made of a bundle of roots (Gusinde and Brush, 1910, p. 128) or of quills (Gusinde, 1937, p. 433). Depilation, with two mussel shells as tweezers, of all face and body hair was practically universal, for both sexes.

304 **Scarification.**—Scarification was practiced as a mourning observance and tattooing as an initiation rite (Gusinde, 1937, p. 963), but neither for ordinary decorative purposes. There was no head deformation, no ear, lip, or septum piercing, no body mutilation of any other kind.

302 **Painting.**—Smearing the head and body with grease or oil was as much protective as decorative. Face and body painting was common, sometimes with use of a small spatula. Only three colors—red, black, and white—were used. Red was derived from burnt earth, black from charcoal, and white from clay. Red symbolized peace;

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

142 bronze. The trunk of the body is large in proportion to their cramped and rather crooked limbs. Their rough, coarse, and extremely dirty black hair half hides yet heightens a villainous expression of the worst description of savage features. . . .

MAN IN CHRISTMAS SOUND, TIERRA DEL FUEGO.

FIG. 42.—Yahgan Indian. (After Hawkesworth.)

● 291 Sometimes these natives upon mankind wear a part of the skin of a guanaco or a seal skin upon their backs [fig. 42], and perhaps the skin of a penguin or a bit of bird hide hangs in front; but often there is nothing, either to hide their nakedness or to preserve warmth, except a scrap of hide, which is tied to the side or back of the body, by a string around the waist. Even this is only for a pocket, in which they may carry stones for their slings, and hide what they pick up or pilfer. A man always carries his sling around his neck or waist, wherever he goes.

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

291 Women wear rather more clothing, that is, they have nearly the whole skin of a guanaco, or seal, wrapped about them, and usually a diminutive apron. The upper part of the wrapper, above a string which is tied around the waist, serves to carry an infant. Neither men nor women have any substitute for shoes.

302 Both sexes oil themselves, or rub their bodies with grease; and daub
301 their faces and bodies with red, black, or white. A fillet is often worn around the head; which upon ordinary occasions is simply a string, made of sinews; but if going to war or dressed for show, the fillet is ornamented with white down, white feathers, or pieces of cloth, if they have obtained any from shipping. . . .

411 It is rather curious that each of these natives is trained to a particular pursuit: thus, one becomes an adept with the spear; another with the sling; another with a bow and arrows; but this excellence in one line does not hinder their attaining a considerable proficiency in all the others.

266 Before entering on the details of Yahgan life we shall dwell briefly on the charges of savagery and cannibalism made by numerous writers. As early as 1600 the Alacaluf were thought to be cannibals, for in that year Van Noort marooned on Santa Maria island one of his officers charged with insubordination, in the belief that he would die of hunger or be eaten by the savages. A quarter of a century later Jaques L'Hermite charged the Yahgan with cannibalism. In more recent years Darwin and Fitzroy have repeated the accusation on hearsay evidence, and their dictum has been widely published. However, no white man has ever witnessed the act of anthropophagy among any of the Fuegian tribes, while in recent years those who have lived with the natives and come to know them well all agree that the idea of eating human flesh is as repugnant to a Fuegian as to a European. According to Martial (p. 193) the Yahgan ordinarily do not eat dog, fox, or cat, because these animals will eat human flesh.

648 The imputation of barbarity, on the other hand, rests on firmer ground, for there are well-authenticated instances of attack by the Yahgan on European crews. The earliest of these resulted in the death at Nassau bay in 1624 of seventeen men from L'Hermite's ships; the most widely published was the massacre at Wooly in 1859 of the crew of the missionary schooner *Allen Gardiner*. What provoked these attacks is a secret intombed with their victims. Early voyagers habitually kidnapped natives to serve as pilots and thus aroused merited resentment. Native women often have

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
S365 Yahgan S365

speak the central dialect. The entire vocabulary was checked by Mr. William Bridges and any words not in the central dialect were noted.

The richness of the language is indicated by the more than 32,000 words brought together by Rev. Thomas Bridges. Many of these words, of course, are compounds, but such a vast number are fundamentally due to unusual specialization in meaning.

On the other hand, Yahgan exhibits the lack, usual among primitive people, of abstract ideas and generalizations. In fact, even in English (which, due to missionary training, some of the Indians spoke fairly well) the Yahgan exhibited inability to grasp the concept of generalities.

The manner of counting was even more primitive than the Ona count, for the Yahgan had no words for 4 and 6, which, to be sure, were compound numbers in the primitive Ona system. The Yahgan count is:

1.	[illegible]	one
2.	[illegible]	two
3.	[illegible]	three
5.	[illegible]	one hand
10.	[illegible]	two hands

Clothing

From Fitzroy's description of the Yahgan, cited above, it appears that there was very little order or regularity in their scanty dress. However, though seemingly inadequate, their clothes were of well-defined forms which we shall describe. It is no exaggeration or overstatement to remark that, considering the climate in which they had to live, this southernmost tribe had less body-covering than any other people in the world. As compared to the Ona, their garments, similar in nature, were deficient in size, while the stiff and unyielding skins they employed from their very nature lacked the warmth supplied by the pliable, voluminous, and snug-fitting robes of the Fuegian Indians. We must add that individuals of both sexes and all ages alike went entirely naked.

1. Cape.—The usual cape worn in summer and winter alike by both men and women was a seal or sea-otter skin. Sometimes two

[illegible] see page 123]

[illegible] gives the word [illegible] for 5. It was not known to any Yahgan Indian or member of the Bridges or Lawrence families encountered by the writer.

3: Lathrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
[illegible] Tolgao [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] OF TERRA DEL FUEGO

Fig. 45.—Tolgao gunnera root. Size, [illegible]

3: Lothrop E-9 (1924-1925) 1928
5985 Yahgan 5985

or more were worn together. In general, however, this garment extended only to the waist and did not completely encircle the body. It was tied across the chest with thongs. When worn so, these ends were over the windward shoulder. And these people (both in a latitude corresponding to that of the Aleutian islands and Labrador!

The eastern Yahgan at times wore capes of guanaco-skin which were better suited to the cold. One of these (fig. 43) we illustrate. It does not attain the size of the Ona robe shown in fig. 6. The western Yahgan and the Alacaluf used skins of the cormorant, a small land-otter known to the Yahgan as *anajini*.

FIG. 43.—Yahgan pubic covering. Width, 8 in. (20.3 cm.)

3. PUBIC COVERING.—A triangular pubic covering of skin (*mishaulina*) was usually worn by the women (fig. 43).

4. MISCELLANEOUS.—The Yahgan often went barefoot, but at times they wore moccasins of seal-skin (*ikil*), which resemble the guanaco-skin footwear of the Ona, but are not made in quite the same way (fig. 45). To begin with, a piece of skin shaped like a truncated triangle is cut out and trimmed to the proper size. This lacks the stretched heel-strap of the Ona moccasin (fig. 8, c). Holes are made across the large end (fig. 46, c), which is lined snugly around the heel. A short strap is then looped through the upper pair of holes (fig. 46, b) and the heel sewn together. Holes are pierced all the long sides; these are doubled over and laced to the foot-fashion with a strap across the toes and across the instep. These moccasins are worn with the hair-side outward and are stuffed with grass. The writer found them when wet even more lax than the guanaco moccasins, and neither so warm nor so comfortable for walking.

3: Lothrop E-S (1924-1925) 1928
3305 Yahgan 3305

•241

FIG. 45.—Yahgan moccasin. Length, 11 in. (14/2305)

FIG. 46.—Pattern of Yahgan moccasin.

302

FIG. 47.—Yahgan legging. Height, 13 in. (14/2306)

3. LEGGINGS.—The eastern Yahgan, who were much more concerned with the guanaco than other members of their tribe, sometimes wore guanaco-skin leggings (pâtac), such as fig. 47, for winter hunting. This garment was also sometimes used by the Ona, from whom the Yahgan probably borrowed it.

ORNAMENTATION

The Yahgan used no set form of hair-dressing, but allowed their locks to fall in a confused mass, except over the forehead where the hair was cut to form a bang. Facial and body hair they pulled out with a pair of mussel-shells.

3: Lothrop E-9 (1924-1925) 1928
5986 Yahgan 5986

THE ENCAMPMENT

391
392

Yahgan clothes were less suited to the climate than those of the Ona, because they were smaller and gave less bodily protection, and because the skins they used were less suitable for their purpose. Thus, guanaco-skin, regularly employed for Ona robes, is thin and flexible, so that it will readily conform with the contours of the body, while the hair is heavy, so that it will shed water and preserve warmth. In contrast, seal-skin and sea-otter skin of Yahgan capes has a heavy and stiff pile and short hair, and therefore

FIG. 51.—Yahgan house. (After Hyades and Deniker.)

gives less protection. As a result of this disparity, to maintain life the Yahgan had to have more shelter than that afforded by an Ona windbreak. And possessing the means of water transportation they could handle heavier equipment than their inland neighbors, though, to be sure, their bark canoes were small and frail to bear much cargo in addition to the human freight.

392

Normally the Yahgan lived in a wigwam known as *ákkurk*. In the west, like the Alacaluf hut, this was usually a domed affair about the size and shape of a large haystack, framed with saplings set upright in a circle or oval and then bent inward until they met

I: Cooper E-4 (on deck) 1946 ©IES Tokosaiche
Yahgan 586

[p. 160 A]

Kalyan 5116

291
411
576

4: Lothrop A-4 (no date) 1929
SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Yahgan SH6
Ona SH4

as the fur mantle, we should naturally expect to find much variation in materials, methods of manufacture, and manner of use. Among the Canoe Indians of Tierra del Fuego, robes were made typically of seal- or otter-skin, and were worn with the fur side outward. Eastern Yahgan at times also used guanaco, while western Yahgan and Alacaluf employed coypu-skins. The stitching was of whale sinew. A characteristic feature of all Magellanic mantles is their small size, for they measure about 35 by 50 inches and covered only the upper part of the body, being held in place with thongs tied across the shoulders. Yahgan capes, to the knowledge of the writer, never received painted decoration on the skin side, but an Alacaluf cape of three coypu-skins, secured for the Museum in 1925 (14/2252), had been painted red.

Ona mantles were made of two or three skins of adult guanaco sewn together with sinews from the back of this animal. They measure about five feet square, which is enough to envelop the body from neck to ankle. Ona women painted their robes red on the skin side, which was worn next the body, and, when this task was finished, they turned the fur side uppermost to wipe their encrimsoned hands. Thus streaks were produced on the fur, but in no way could they be regarded as deliberately made patterns. In fact, the only fields for painted decoration among the Ona were their persons and their dance paraphernalia, while their patterns, like those of the Yahgan,[5] were crude daubs of color, uncertain in line and simple in rhythm.

On the use of fur robes in the Chaco, Nordenskiöld[6] writes that they are seemingly an impractical garment for a tropical climate infested with insects; but, as a matter of fact, the nights are often cool, while chilling winds sweep over the country in May and June. Formerly cloaks made of coypu-skins were common, but these have given way to sheep-skin robes owing to the trade value of the former, and the sheep-skin garments in turn are being replaced by capes or ponchos of woven material. Robes in the Chaco are worn fur side inward, and they are painted on the skin side (fig. 12).

The Tehuelche cape (fig. 1), known as *quillanque*, is a fur robe measuring a few inches more than five feet on a side. The fur was worn next to the body and the skin side was elaborately painted.

---

[5] Lothrop, 1928, pl. 1a.
[6] 1912, p. 98.